

Loud & Clear

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Using a Cell Phone With Low Vision

Cingular Wireless has a new option that helps people with vision problems navigate their cell phone menus. The feature, called "Talks," is based on text-to-speech software made by ScanSoft and works with almost all of the phone's functions. The software provides audible alerts about battery life and signal strength. "Talks" is offered as an option for the Nokia 6620 phone. It costs \$199, but Cingular offers introductory rebates for the blind of \$199 with two-year contracts and \$100 for one year.

The product can be ordered by phone at 866-241-6568 (TTY 711) and at Cingular stores.



Staff News

Good-byes for Jeanette

Friends and co-workers celebrated Access Services Branch Manager Jeanette Studley's 27 years of commitment to the library and to making library branches accessible to seniors and the disabled community. More than 80 people attended her retirement luncheon at the Kings Park Library on February 17, 2005.

■ continued on page 2

**Fairfax
County
Public
Library**

Access Services

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As a result of Jeanette's energy and leadership, Access Services has evolved from a bookmobile and large print typewriter to an independent branch. We can provide up-to-date technology for vision and hearing loss. Not only is this technology available at our location, but computer access, magnifiers and assisted listening are available in every branch of the Fairfax County Public Library.

As laudable as these accomplishments are, Jeanette's greatest legacy will be the lives she touched. Those of us who are privileged to work at Access Services hear from our customers with great frequency that lives have been changed and quality of life improved because they can read again.

Jeanette will be missed but the changes she has fought for will remain. The mission that she began will move forward on a solid base. Jeanette requested that in lieu of gifts, a donations may be made to Services for the Visually Impaired. The organization's address is: 8720 Georgia Ave., Suite 310, Silver Spring MD 20910; Tel: 301-589-0894; TTY 711.

Another Milestone

Readers' Advisor Laurie doCarmo was honored by Fairfax County for 30 years of service. Those of you who know Laurie have been privileged to know a caring, dedicated professional. We are grateful to have her as part of our staff.

Welcome

Our new branch manager is Starr Smith. Starr has more than 15 years of library management experience in academic, military and public libraries, as well as teaching college-level English. Her most recent position in our library system was as assistant branch manager at the Kingstowne Library. Starr is an enthusiastic bibliophile who reviews adult and young adult fiction for two professional publications. She is eager to get acquainted with our Access Services users. Please contact her with your comments and suggestions at 703-324-8380; TTY: 703-324-8365 or e-mail: starr.smith@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Library Offers Free Audio Books for Internet Download

The Fairfax County Public Library now offers more than 700 free audio books that residents can listen to on computers and portable players. The growing collection includes books by best-selling authors like Stephen King and Nevada Barr, plus popular instructional books and other genres. The collection can be accessed from the Library's Web site at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.



"Digital audio books allow you to take your reading anywhere," says Library Director Edwin S. Clay III. In addition to offering books on cassette tapes, CDs, in regular and large print, and in some cases Braille, Clay explains the library's digital audio service "allows the Library to offer leisure reading and information in yet another useful and convenient format."

The audio books can be played on any PC that supports Windows Media Player 9.0 and above. They can also be listened to on a number of portable music players offered by Dell, Gateway, Phillips/Nike, RCA, Samsung and Virgin. At this time, the audio books cannot be played on Apple equipment including iPods. They can be played, however, on portable media centers, Pocket PCs and even some smart phone devices.

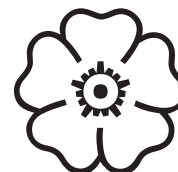
The digital audio books can be checked out for three weeks and renewed once, and users can borrow up to six books at a time. Just as with other book formats, readers must have a library card to check out digital audio books. Library cards are issued free of charge to anyone who lives, works or goes to school in Fairfax County. Library card applications are available in any of the system's 21 branches, or at the library's Web site: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

Used Low-Vision Equipment

An auction site for buying and selling used equipment for vision impairment is now available at: **www.ocutrade.com**.

Think Spring 2006 for Technology Fair

Due to staffing changes and other transitions at Access Services, we have made an adjustment in our plans for the next Sight & Sound Fair. We have returned to our traditional scheduling of every two years in May. Look for announcements early next year about a great event with added value. "Sight & Sound 2006" will showcase both technology and resource solutions for vision and hearing loss.



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